

## **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Suffolk Lawn Tennis Association (SLTA) is run and managed by volunteers. It has a long history of reliance on, and celebration of, its' volunteers. SLTA's values support and are supported by our approach to volunteering. The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) estimates that more than 25,000 people are volunteering their time throughout the year to open up tennis across the country<sup>1</sup>.

### **Types of Volunteers**

SLTA is, therefore, reliant upon the skills and talents of volunteers working together cooperatively and with those who receive payment for their services to the organisation. Opportunities for volunteering include:

- Membership of the Management Committee and such subgroups/projects as it may set up from time to time;
- Fulfilling the role of competition organiser;
- Acting as officials/helpers/qualified first aider at regular or one-off tennis events/trips run by SLTA locally or further afield; and/or being in attendance when someone with a DBS check is required;
- Leading or helping at SLTA social events;
- Fundraising;
- Collaboration with external voluntary bodies involved with SLTA for help with specific projects.

### **Recruiting, Retaining and Valuing Volunteers**

Volunteers may put themselves forward for appointment or election (in the case of Management Committee membership), volunteering opportunities may be advertised (on the website, via email or social media – as appropriate), or volunteering roles may be suggested to people individually or as a group by the Chair of the Management Committee. The requirements of the Safeguarding Policy, Safe Recruitment Policy and Diversity and Inclusion Policy apply to volunteering.

The Secretary to the Management Committee:

- Ensures induction for new volunteers/voluntary roles is provided as appropriate;
- Acts as the main point of contact for all volunteers;
- Maintains records of volunteers;
- Identifies the training and support needs of volunteers;
- Distributes communications and information to volunteers as appropriate
- Suggests ways to say thank you to volunteers.

The Management Committee has overall responsibility for recruiting volunteers, and recruiters will consider whether the volunteer:

- Has the relevant skills and experience to undertake the role or is capable of developing them with available support

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lta.org.uk/roles-and-venues/venues/club-management/club-committees-volunteers/>

- Is willing to undergo a criminal records check with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) if required for the role, or has a clean LTA approved and 'in date' DBS check
- Is willing to undertake such training/qualifications as are necessary for the role  
Is willing to accept such induction/supervision as it is necessary for the role
- Appreciate that for SLTA's insurance to protect them, they are responsible for ensuring necessary risk assessments have been completed and that these are understood and adhered to by them, prior to undertaking tasks/roles as a volunteer.

The Management Committee is responsible for:

- Maintaining a register of volunteers, and their DBS checks if appropriate
- Providing such induction/supervision as is required to each volunteer
- Making available to volunteers such policies, procedures and risk assessments as are required for them to safely fulfil their role
- Funding any expenses incurred by volunteers, as long as these have been pre-agreed and proof of expenditure is provided
- Learning from the ideas and input of volunteers
- Recognising the efforts of volunteers – including entering them for such ticket ballot/awards as are available<sup>2</sup>.

Appended to this policy is some guidance that may be useful in implementing this policy.

### **Resolving Issues**

The relationship between SLTA and its volunteers is entirely voluntary and does not imply any contract. Volunteers may step down at any time for any reason, although for some roles it is expected that notice will be given. It is important, however, that SLTA is able to maintain the standards of its' services, and it is also important that volunteers should enjoy making their contribution.

If there is any dissatisfaction on the part of the volunteer with any aspect of the work, the course of action should be:

- An initial explanation of the dissatisfaction will be given by the volunteer to the relevant project leader/designated Management Committee member (Secretary)
- If that does not resolve the concern, then a meeting should be convened with the volunteer by the relevant project leader/designated Management Committee member (Secretary) the grievance cannot be resolved even by the Chair of the Management Committee, the volunteer may choose to step down.

If a volunteer is unable to fulfil their role to the required standard for any reason or is in breach of the Code of Conduct, Safeguarding Policy or other essential requirement (such as a risk assessment), the following steps will be taken by a designated member of the Management Committee (or leader of the project if more appropriate):

- An initial meeting with the volunteer will be arranged in which the concerns will be explained with the aim of resolving them

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/lta-tennis-awards/>

- If the situation/standard of performance does not improve, the Management Committee will stop using the volunteer's services.

**Approved: 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022**

**Review by: 5<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

## Guidance

Things to think about:

1. People volunteer for a variety of reasons:
  - To get satisfaction from doing something useful
  - To network/meet new people/make new friends
  - To build self-confidence
  - To get experience
  - To learn new skills
  - To try out different types of work
  - To make a difference to people's lives
  - To obtain training/qualifications
  - Because they have the time
  - Because they love tennis.
2. When recruiting volunteers, there should be emphasis on having fun; socialising; reusing old schools and learning new ones.
3. Juniors are an important part of the volunteer workforce and, given the chance, young people will take on responsibilities and bring energy and enthusiasm to a variety of voluntary roles. There may be benefits for them including opportunities for work experience, obtaining references for future paid roles inside/outside tennis, and adding to their cv or UCAS undergraduate personal statement.
4. Don't forget to look outside SLTA and its member organisations. There are many organisations that supply volunteers, including:
  - The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO): <https://www.ncvo.org.uk/about-us/>
  - Do It: <https://doit.life/volunteer>
  - National Citizen Service (NCS): <https://wearencs.com/what-is-ncs>
5. Valuing volunteers may include:
  - A simple thank you from the Chair can be enough and this can be done in front of an audience or directly to the person(s) concerned
  - Lunch on us - it need not be expensive but it is a special event which reflects SLTA's appreciation of the hard work involved in a particular project or event. Great for team building too!
  - Awards, including for long service, are much valued by their recipients
  - Reward people who make a special contribution to the achievement of SLTA's plans
  - External awards
  - Team branding can help to create a valuable team identity and project a strong public image
  - Discount vouchers for a local sports shops, or discounted tournament/match entry fees
  - Entry into the Wimbledon ballot for volunteers
  - Expenses – think about reimbursing volunteers for the expenses e.g. travel and telephone calls.